BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 08654 284 0

No. 7588.351

GIVEN BY

Alice Abbott

Boston Public Library

This book is to be returned to the Library on or before the date last stamped below.

AUG 19 1953

FORM NO. 609: 11.28.52: 50M.

7588.351

"Stand and be Counted."

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

SPEECH OF

WENDELL PHILLIPS

AT THE

CONVENTION

HELD AT

Tremont Temple, Boston, October 6, 1875.

Mr President, Ladies and Gentlemen: I don't feel that I can add anything to the wisdom or earnestness of the address to the voters of Massachusetts. I wish I could. The older I grow, the deeper I am impressed with the importance of the temperance movement in the civil affairs of the Republic. I grow more and more profoundly convinced every day that I live that this movement holds in its hands the possibility of the success of republican institutions. I believe that Europe is able to-day truthfully to assert that in the government of cities, of great masses of men, so far as we have tried the experiment, republican institutions are a failure. Whether it sounds sad to us or not, at the close of the first century of republican life, I believe that, decided by any one of our great cities, every student of American affairs is obliged to confess that instead of being ruled by numbers, by the common sense, or the deliberate opinion of a majority, we are ruled on the one side by wealth and on the other side by the criminal classes; and in this comparison, New York and New Orleans cannot bear the test a moment by the side of Paris and London. I have been accustomed to say from this platform for the last fifteen years that it was not political caucuses, it was not political parties, that elected the Mayor or the Aldermen of the city of Boston. I commend every man that hears me to study on the proolem of the last twenty-five years and see if he can truthfully deny that, however outwardly respectable in private life, social position, general record, the Mayor and Aldermen of the city of Boston have been, have they not practically been a standing com ittee appointed by the grog shops of the peninsula? [Applause.] To-day, it State street, representing the wealth, and Beacon street, representing the fashion, and Harvard College, representing the education, should try to elect a Mayor of Boston, publicly resolved and pledged to execute even the present laws of the State, they would be defeated. The rum interest of Boston, so strong, so practiced, so well organized as it is, could easily defeat the three great dominating influences of society, and they have done it. I believe, therefore, that in the success of the prohibitory movement reside the ultimate success and triumph of the Republican experiment.

I wish to say another thing, for it is several years since I have been upon the platform. I have closely followed the discussion of this question here and in England, where the press gives it a far more deliberate discussion than it favors us with here—I mean the opposition press—and I am ready deliberately to affirm also that I have never heard or seen anything alleged against it that, even courteously described, deserved the name of an argument I remember the sad exhibition before a committee of the Legislature some eight or ten years ago, when great men of the Commonwealth prostituted their names and their positions as scientific men, and placed on record a report against the policy of this movement. It is the saddest exhibition of perverted intellect and purchased opinion that the records of the Commonwealth can show. [Applause.] It does not contain within that bulky volume one single assertion that deserves the name of an argument fairly against the avowed purpose and design of the prohibitory movement of New England. How then are we to account, if this be so—how are we to account for the continued defeat of the temperance movement in Massachusetts? Everybody knows, familiar with our Commonwealth, the earnest, high-principled, intelligent and devout men who rallied around the prohibitory standard flag. In that mass was included the best, most active and most praiseworthy element that made the Republican party of Massachusetts. [Applause.] If you had taken out of the Republican party, from 1860 to 1870, the good sense, the just principles, the civil earnestness of the temperance element that was massed within it, the R publican party would have been defeated in this Commonwealth. Why is it then that with so stormy an element the nucleus of the Republican movement pledged, you may say, to this idea and this conviction, the Republican party has never yet done an honest temperance work in one whole year [applause]; never given us in the legislature or the executive chair whole-souled and thorough assistance? Well, I have no time now—I have gone over it—and hundreds of your speakers have—to analyze the causes which underlie this perpetual failure. It is the nature of the republican institutions. It is in the fact that the vast mass of wealth ministering to the criminal classes of the community, an alliance between the greed of capital and the immorality of the community, is made to triumph against us in every political movement. [Applause.] In New York, in this city, as far west as you can travel, everywhere between the honest men of divided opinion—honestly divided opinion—upon methods of political action, taking the name Whig or Tory, Republican or Democrat—standing between these two classes are the prostituted millions of wealth and the criminal classes to whom it panders. They control the politics of the State. I hope the time will come—if republican institutions are to succeed it certainly will come—when the conscience, when the education, when the principle of the State shall be able to make its laws and execute them. [Applause.] But it is not the case at present. I see no hope for it at present.

One reason why I came here this afternoon is because I think we stand at a division of two great ways. The talk of the Democratic or the Republican party is beginning to cease. They will both break up before two years are past. They have both of them survived the purposes which called them into being. They are neither of them willing to look in the face the great national issues that stand at the door. The elements that make up each are being separated from their cohesion, and will float away into new relations. You will not live two years before you will see—no matter whether these names be preserved or not, an entirely new arrangement of the political force of this State and of every other State. Now it is exceedingly important in that transition movement that the temperance men of the Commonwealth should teach the politicians how much is their weight and power. [Applause.] It is of the utmost importance at the moment when the counters are going up and down the political highways and marking out the strength upon which they can rely in the coming struggle—it is exceedingly important that the temperance men of the

Commonwealth should stand and be counted for once. [Renewed applause] I don't care how important are any State issues to day. The most important thing that a temperance man can do this year is to find some plot of ground upon which he can stand, with every other temperance man in the State, till the political leaders have counted him. [Great applause.] I don't care how it is done; it is no matter how it is done if it can only be accomplished. If in the summing up in times to come, reckoning up political strength and political changes ahead, the political leaders and wire pullers are able to say, put down stern, resolute, uncompromising Prohibitionists at 25,000, your victory is won. [Loud applause.] That is the one use, it seems to me, that we shall be able to make of this campaign. No possibility of sending men into the Legislature or into the Governor's chair, to do us any effective service—at least there is hardly a possibility, except in localities. The great object is that temperance should, in this universal shaking of all forces and influences, show itself, and I agree with this report in that respect.

I look upon the political arrangements of the last year as I suppose this report, from what I heard of it, has described them. The liquor interest of the State, a year or two ago, tried to carry the Republican party over bodily into the grog shops. They affirmed their policy, and ten or fifteen thousand men went out of it in order to teach it—the rum philosophy—and they elected Mr Gaston to show the party how it could be done. Now that class of men don't want to stay where they were. They are not contented there; they, even they, have the grace to be ashamed. [Laughter and applause.] The supposition, impossible as it appears, is still probably true, and they are endeavoring to get back into respectable company. They come back to make for themselves a place in the Republican party. They come back this year to bring the grog shops into the Republican party, instead of, as their policy last year, of carrying the Republican party into the grogshops. [Applause.] Now it must be done respectably. [Laughter and applause.] You could not take the millionnaire brewer, you could not take the owner of some successful and exceedingly profitable bar and put him at the head. That would not do. You all remember the old anti-slavery discussion in the first ten years of it. If you had a clergyman, or a judge, or a lawyer, to come on to the platform and defend slavery, behind whom did he hide himself? George Washington. The first thing he said was, "Why, gentlemen, I stand here, and I remember as long ago as when I was a boy at school that George Washington was a slaveholder. You don't mean to abuse him." He hid himself behind the respectability of George Washington. Well, now, when they plan to bring back the grogshops into the Republican party, they must have an eminently respectable man to hide behind [applause], and the element that Alexander H. Rice brings into this trade is not his statesmanship — although he is an intelligent man; it is not his record, although that is a very fair one for an American politician [applause]; it is not his social position, it is not his business capacity. They don't care for any one of these elements. The article that they wanted to buy, and that he has to sell, is respectability. [Applause.] Isn't that the reason why he triumphed over his other competitor, because in that article he was deemed to have as much as ten per cent. the advantage. [Applause.] That is the philosophy that underlies the movement. It is an eminently wise one. It is as cunning as it can possibly be. It takes a very long time to shake an indifferent or a half converted Republican out of the conviction that after all he ought to vote for the very respectable man that has been nominated. [Laughter and applause.] I could count you a dozen men who floated for twenty odd years on American politics, and no man was able to state one single bladder that kept them afloat except their respectability. [Laughter.]

Now I wish to say nothing disrespectful to Mr. Rice. I acknowledge his record. I acknowledge his character. It is on that very account the Republican party was able to sell him for 15,000 converts back into their ranks. No less a quantity of that quality would have brought these men back. It had to be a large payment, and they supposed it to be a payment of specie dollars. I should think it a very inflated currency. Well now, gentlemen, it seems to me, as this report lays it down, that we are to learn our tactics largely from watching the enemy. The greatest generals have always been able to change their plan of battles when on the field; seldom able to go there with a pronounced plan and carry it out. They must be ready to meet on that great chess-board, the move of our adversary is for the purpose of compromising your position. They want to make it impossible that you should move with a clean sweep. They are ready, and you will find the journals of the next ten days or three weeks blowing with the loudest bugle the cry that it is unsafe at the present moment to weaken the Republican party. I am one of those that believe that abstractly. (Laughter.) I believe that the idea which most honest men connected with the Republican party have in their minds should be uppermost in this nation for the next eight or ten years. When I read the Boston journals and look upon the scorn, sarcasm, contempt that they pour upon every honest man that comes and tells us that the experiment of civil life is not yet finished south of Mason and Dixon's line; that this nation has a hard fight yet; when I see the insults which followed the steps of Mr. Senator Morton in the columns of the Boston press because he chose to regard what has been the conviction of the past ten years and is not changed—the set purpose of the white race, on the one side, to bring that other race into a practically menial condition and defeat the amendments; when I saw that ridicule I said to myself, the loyalty of this press during the war was a loyalty of fear. They would have been glad to draw down the stars and stripes except that they feared the mob. They are the same spaniels licking the face of the South that they were in 1851. I believe, therefore, from every atom of evidence that I have been able to collect, privately or publicly—and whenever, in the next generation, the archives of this government are opened to public inspection, I believe the evidence will be doubled—that national interference is needed to carry out the great experiment which the war has enabled us to settle. I believe, therefore, in the necessity of the idea that founded the Republican party being preserved, and I don't want unnecessarily to strike a blow, even in favor of temperance, against that idea. I therefore narrow my attack. If a man can vote the Republican ticket I would let him vote it in general; if he sees anything objectionable upon it, of course he must stay away. But the significance of that ticket to us is in one name. The treason of that ticket to temperance is one name; the seal set to that bond of infamy is one single stamp; and it is the nomination for Governor. [Applause, cries of "Good, good."] That is the seal of the bond betwixt the grogshops of Boston and the Republican leaders of Massachusetts. [Applause.] Now we are to vote that seal off of the bond [applause]; and I say to every Republican temperance man in the State—of course the Democrats will vote their own ticket—erase that name, whether you put another on or not, and let the Republican party learn that the temperance people have learned themselves the power of organization. [Applause.]

Let me tell you a little anecdote in the progress of the liquor cause. We had a man in the Legislature of Massachusetts who indulged in the most insolent and abusive language toward the labor cause for two or three years. Every vote was wrong, and it was not only his vote; the virus of his insolence was even worse than his vote. Well, we hadn't $15,000 to carry on a political campaign over the state, but we gathered up his record, we quoted his expressions; we gave the date of his votes; we gave the language of them. It didn't make a piece of paper more than half as large as a sheet of foolscap. But when the nomination day came on in his district we printed 5000 of them and circulated them around in all the district where electors were to be chosen and in the town where the Convention was to assemble. When that Convention was assembled, we will suppose his name was Brown, his rivals were Smith and Jones. They went to the committee, and said, "It will be very unwise to nominate Brown, because these labor fellows are undermining him everywhere. It will be the most risky thing we can do, because we don't know how many names they will pick off." We knew the indorsers of our little bills would be his rivals. They went into the convention and the way they circulated information against Brown was a caution to behold. His name never appeared in the convention, his friends have not dared to put him forward since; he has never got his head high enough to see how many votes he would lose, and in that district there

7588.35

is no feeling in political circles stronger than the respect they have for the labor reformer. Since that day they have not by ignorance or mistake committed such a blunder as to put a man in nomination who has ever said a word against the labor cause. Such a thing had not been heard of within the memory of the oldest voter. It was a most wholesome exhibition of the efficacy of homœopathic medicine.

Now, practically, but on a broader scale, I want the same things done here. I want you to record such a protest against this corrupt coalition between rum and respectability, as our friend Dr. Miner has given you the lead—record such a protest and forbid the unholy marriage at the ballot box. Do it simply by erasing that name. I wish the ticket could go ahead so as to rival the palmiest days of the Republican majority, provided only that there be a beggarly count of three or four thousand votes for Governor. [Applause.] It is the finest opportunity that the temperance party has had to show the Republican party the absurdity of their conduct. Don't you remember how the old Whigs, the respectable Whigs, how they used to bid for the southern support? Webster himself, clumsy fellow, he went down and tried to bid for it, but there was always a Democrat by, who would underbid him, and he never got anything. Now the Republican party are trying to bid for the grogshops of Massachsetts. They can't do it. There is another party that can outbid them every time. [Laughter and applause.] They are trying the impossibility of a respectable party selling low enough to outbid their rivals in that respect. It can't be done. [Laughter.] History constantly repeats itself. It is the most amusing thing in the world for an abolitionist that began in 1835 to watch the political lofty tumblings and all sorts of tricks as it went on between Whigs and Democrats of anti-slavery times, and see the same thing going on in the temperance cause.

I would have you take the Republican party and watch it with that same everlasting vigilance, so that this sort of bargain and sale cannot be made. Then in that coming arrangement of new elements in the combinations that are to be formed to carry our political design forward in the next generation, the temperance movement will have its proper weight and be properly consulted. It has always been a wonder to me—the slackness of some of the temperance men in the month of November. [Applause.] They are perpetually being reminded that there is some man or some policy or party organization to be saved. That is very true. I wish to say nothing disrespectful about the Democratic party, but we know very well that the idea of it is connected with that of an iron organization. To day men are running up and down the streets and saying that Gov. Gaston has this interest and that element with him, but you will see every Democratic man voting the Democratic ticket when the polls open next November.

As Lincoln said of Grant, when they told him he was drunk, "I wish I could know where he bought his whiskey," so I say if I could only know where the Democratic party gets that glue which jo ns their ranks together, and we could buy a little of it in the temperance party [laughter and applause], if we could only make every temperance man in the Commonwealth obtain some policy, some principle, and then stick to it for once or twice in their political life. Stand up and be counted, show the strength that really belongs to us—the strongest sentiment in the Commonwealth. Poll Massachusetts to-day. Test her by intellect, by character, by energy, by enterprise in business, by high tone in social life, by anything you please, there will be more temperance men in such a list than in any other party. Massachusetts, when you speak of the best element of the State, is a temperance State; nobody denies it, but yet, when you come to the political element, how frequently she is cheated, deluded, bought. What was the great power of that leader of the Irishmen, that I was speaking of in this or the other hall but a month or two ago? He could not be cheated, he could not be bought. He could not be bullied. Where he stood ten years before they knew they would find him now. If you can only infuse that same energy—honest, persistent, determined—into the temperance body of Massachusetts, we could clear all these streets in any six months. [Applause.] My house is surrounded with grogshops; you may walk in any direction, and till 1 o'clock in the morning you may hear the blind revelry, with the policemen stupidly gazing at it. Who are the men that own the roofs under which it is done? The respectable professional men of Boston; the men whose names are on everybody's lips, when they mention Boston enterprise and business. They are the men whose names you will read on front doors when you walk down to see the latest and most superb architecture in the city. Why do they let them for such purposes? Because they can get 20 per cent., when for an honest business they could not get 10. Timid capital that flaunts its face defiantly in the presence of the halting public opinion of temperance Massachusetts would not dare to stand the advent of the sheriff claiming damages 24 hours. Why is this large section of perhaps 500 acres let for nothing but grog? Because they know that the mayors of the city of Boston were chosen because they agreed they would not execute the laws. [Applause and cries of "Hear, hear."]

And now, gentlemen, it is our fault that this is so. It is the fault of the temperance men of Massachusetts. It is because you give up on one side to the Democratic party and on the other side to the Republican. What is the trust committed to your keeping? The execution of wholesome laws for the Commonwealth, isn't it?

In the present State election there is hardly an atom of national significance. We can afford to defeat and trample under foot either ticket, and it is a matter of indifference in a national sense; the best use that we can make of the opportunity is to teach the political leaders what they have to expect of us. I ask, therefore, that no man that ever attended a temperance convention with a purpose to act out its teachings shall throw a ticket into the box this next November that has the name of Alexander H. Rice on it. [Tremendous applause.] They used to say 20 years ago when Chas. Sumner was in Europe, that his empty chair was more eloquent than any man who spoke in the Senate chamber. That blank spot, pasted over with blank paper on the Republican ticket of Massachusetts, covering the gubernatorial candidate will be the weightiest and most effective ticket that can be thrown in Massachusetts next month. [Applause.] And if you choose to put on that blank paper the name of our friend Baker as a certificate of who rubbed out Rice, that it was a temperance man [loud applause]; that there can be no mistake; that they shall not say it was some old enemy in the mayoralty, or some man who had a diff rence with him on business matters; or some crazy labor reformer or paper money inflationist—but an honest temperance man—then will we at least be counted at last. I have been a teetotaller ever since 1836, and I have been waiting all that time to see the temperance body counted. I wish you would consent to be counted once before I die. [Applause.] If my forty years of temperance work gives me a right to ask a temperance comrade anything, I must ask him that he will stand and be counted. [Laughter and applause.] Some of my friends used to say, they would vote for me. Now, my friends, I ask you only, don't vote for Mr. Rice. [Applause.]

The following Resolutions and Address were adopted by the Convention which unanimously nominated the

HON. JOHN I. BAKER,

of Beverly, for Governor:

Resolutions.

Resolved, That there can be no greater peril than party competition for the liquor vote; that any party not openly opposed to the traffic w engage in this competition—will court the fa of the criminal classes, will barter the pu morals, the purity of the ballot, and every o of good government, for party success.

Resolved, That the Republican party vided on this question, and we can h hope from a divided party. Represen two extremes of license and prohibitio neither decide for license nor for p it can neither pronounce for the life,

death of the dram-shop system, and its opposing forces neutralize each other, so that it can neither adopt any policy, execute any laws, nor make any issue on this question.

Resolved, That in the present emergency the safety of the Republican party and of the cause of prohibition depends upon the amputation of the liquor wing of the party, making the party a unit for the right. That can be most effectually secured by defeating the license candidate for Governor, Alexander H. Rice.

Address.

The Prohibitionists of Massachusetts, in Convention assembled, make this appeal to the people of the State:—

For the first time in ten years the Republican party has nominated, as its candidate for Governor, an opponent of prohibition. This "new departure" of the party calls for new action. You are met at the beginning of the canvass with the proposition that the exigencies of the party make it your duty to vote for the regular nominees. This, though from the lips of men who last year bolted the regular nomination, is entitled to weight. Most Prohibitionists are Republicans, and have been identified with that party from its origin; many of us were among its founders. It has had a glorious history as the party of great moral principles. If its best elements can be conserved, and its worse ones driven out, it will deserve and obtain a long continued life. How to effect this is the problem which confronts us.

Last year the party nominated one of the cleanest, staunchest, truest Republicans in the State. Twelve thousand Republicans who voted the remainder of the State ticket—one-third of whom voted in Boston—bolted his nomination, most of them voting for the Democratic candidate. Mr Rice's nomination has been secured mainly by the votes of these men. It is a bid for the votes of the liquor traffic and its friends. The leaders of the Republican party must be taught that such catering to the liquor taffic *will not pay*.

A vote for Mr Rice is an indorsement of his views on this question. Against him as a man we bring no charges, save that he is an opponent of prohibition. None but a man of eminent respectability would have answered the purpose. The problem was to recover the liquor vote which was lost last year, and at the same time retain the votes of the better portion of the party. Only a "respectable" man could do this. Mr Rice's respectability is a strong element of availability It is of great value in uniting the vote of the dramshop and the church for the protection of the former. So unholy an alliance must not succeed. The people must teach the party leaders that "RICE, RUM AND RESPECTABILITY" is not a good rallying cry for Massachusetts.

Mr Rice represents the determination of the party leaders to obtain the vote and influence of the liquor interest. The Republican party does not want it - cannot afford to have it. The price of its friendship at the polls is protection to the liquor traffic. To pay that price will rob the party of its life blood, losing it the votes of the men who have in the past made it what it is. The defeat of Mr Rice will demonstrate that the mass of the party are not ready to surrender it to the liquor interest, even for votes.

"The honest enforcement of existing laws" is one of the pledges of the Republican party; but what fair enforcement of any liquor law can be expected from Mr Rice, who, as Mayor of Boston, permitted the prohibitory law to become a nullity by failing to use its most effective provision—the seizure clause? Especially is this hope vain when it is remembered that at various times in recent years, when the liquor interest has sought the control of the Republican party, it has thought Mr Rice its most fit candidate. The liquor interest never mistakes an enemy for a friend.

But the strongest argument against license is not that it has not been enforced, nor that it has failed, as it has in a hundred trials in Massachusetts, and in centuries of trials elsewhere, but that it is *morally wrong* to license drunkard-making. A vote for Mr. Rice is a vote for the perpetuation of a licensed liquor traffic under the protection of the Republican party. Against this we call upon the Christian and temperance voters to protest. The only place of protest is at the polls, and the only method, opposition to all who represent this policy.

Nor will this affect the success of the Republican party. Its triumph in the State is to be judged by the election of the general State ticket. The defeat of one candidate, on a local issue, with the election of the rest of the ticket, will add emphasis to the party victory, teaching that Massachusetts believes not only in the Republican party, but in the Republican party freed from all entangling alliances with that most corrupting element in politics, the liquor traffic.

For this cause we summon all temperance Republicans to the polls, not for the defeat of the Republican party, but for the defeat of that one of its candidates who represents the surrender of the party to the liquor interest. The salvation of the Republican party depends upon the defeat of this element. Those who believe that party should be successful can make it so by voting the remainder of the State ticket, and electing a Republican and Prohibition Legislature. But let your vote against Alexander H. Rice teach the world that in Massachusetts an attempt to elect a Republican Governor by uniting the votes of the dramshop and the church cannot succeed.

Boston Public Library
Central Library, Copley Square

Division of
Reference and Research Services

The Date Due Card in the pocket indicates the date on or before which this book should be returned to the Library.

Please do not remove cards from this pocket.